

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY TREE BOARD
FEBRUARY 6, 2013**

The Michigan City Tree Board met in a regular meeting in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall Building, 100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City, Indiana, on Wednesday, February 6, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

President Mick Wulff called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Board members present: Patricia Boy, Kathy Ceperich, Bill Ginther, Jeffery Meyer, Dave Morlan, Mick Wulff

Board members absent: Laura Kalk

Staff present: City Forester Frank Seilheimer, Planning Department Secretary Debbie Wilson

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Wulff mentioned that his issue with residency requirements to be on the board has been researched by the City and it has been determined that he may continue to serve on the board.

Mrs. Boy stated that the nominating committee's suggested slate was Mick Wulff, President; Jeffery Meyer, Vice-President; Kathy Ceperich, Secretary.

A motion approving the nominating committee's slate was made by Mrs. Boy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ginther, with the vote as follows: (Ayes): Patricia Boy, Bill Ginther, Jeffery Meyer, Dave Morlan, Mick Wulff (Nays): None

With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the motion was unanimously APPROVED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The chair entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of December 5, 2012.

A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Mrs. Boy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morlan, with the vote as follows: (Ayes): Patricia Boy, Bill Ginther, Jeffery Meyer, Dave Morlan, Mick Wulff (Nays): None

With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the motion was unanimously APPROVED.

SECRETARY TREASURER'S REPORT

The chair entertained a motion for approval of the financial reports ended 12/31/12 and 01/31/13.

A motion to approve the reports was made by Mrs. Boy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meyer, with the vote as follows: (Ayes): Patricia Boy, Bill Ginther, Jeffery Meyer, Dave Morlan, Mick Wulff (Nays): None

With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the motion was unanimously APPROVED.

CLAIMS

The chair entertained a motion to approve the claims for January 2013 and February 2013.

A motion to approve the claims was made by Mrs. Boy. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ginther, with the vote as follows: (Ayes): Patricia Boy, Bill Ginther, Jeffery Meyer, Dave Morlan, Mick Wulff (Nays): None

With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the motion was unanimously APPROVED.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach:

The Board discussed participation in the St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 9, 2013.

A motion was made by Mr. Meyer approving participation in the St. Patrick's Day Parade and allocating an amount not to exceed \$200.00 for related expenses. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Boy, with the vote as follows: (Ayes): Patricia Boy, Bill Ginther, Jeffery Meyer, Dave Morlan, Mick Wulff (Nays): None

With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the motion was unanimously APPROVED.

City Park Trees:

Mr. Seilheimer reported that the project in Fedder's Alley is on hold until they get their equipment back which is being used for snow removal at this time. He anticipates getting the equipment back after St. Patrick's Day to utilize for two weeks and complete the project.

City Street Trees:

Mr. Meyer asked if there was any significant damage from the high winds.

Mr. Seilheimer stated that one private tree came down in the 2400 block of Coolspring Avenue.

Grant Application and Maintenance:

Mr. Seilheimer stated that the grants currently available are out of our district. More grants will be available soon.

He reported with regard to the Southgate grant that he would work with the new Indiana Urban Forestry coordinator to wrap up the details. The project will be done in the spring and closed out in July.

Purchasing and Tree Planting:

Mr. Seilheimer advised that 85-100 trees will be purchased for the Southgate project which will exhaust the aerial easement tree planting fund. At this time there is no line item in the budget for tree planting; it is the intent to achieve a \$10,000 line item in the 2014 budget (as well as consecutive budgets) to purchase trees each year which would allow for 50 to be planted in the spring and 50 in the fall.

Mr. Seilheimer informed that since the aerial easement fund was created, approximately \$67,000 worth of trees were planted. Aside from other construction projects, over 1,300 trees were planted over the last six years; including the construction projects over 2,700 trees were planted over the last six years.

Mr. Seilheimer added that the last \$3,300 from that fund will get matched with the \$6,000 from the grant and \$3,000 of the City's labor as in-kind match for cash.

Planning Department:

Mrs. Boy reported that there was a request for rezoning before the Plan Commission from business to light industrial at Chuck's Value Center on Highway 212. She stated that this area is already a business area and the rezoning would not affect the trees.

Urban Forest Plan Maintenance:

Mr. Seilheimer reported that he started updating the tree inventory last year. He is currently working with the Sanitary District as they hired a new GIS Coordinator who will be assisting other City departments as well.

Tree City Designation:

Mr. Seilheimer stated that there should be a response on the status of our application by the end of March.

OLD BUSINESS

The Board discussed informational flyers to be included and mailed out with the city's water bills.

Mr. Meyer stated that the Water Department has been contacted and gave their approval for the mailing. The content to be included in the flyer has to be determined yet. Mr. Meyer will contact other committee members (Kathy Ceperich, Laura Kalk); they will have the information available for review at the March meeting for mailing in April.

Mr. Seilheimer mentioned that consideration is also being given to distribution of flyers this spring as part of substantial completion of the Elston Grove project which would cause some overlapping and redundancy with the Tree Board's mailings.

Mr. Meyer stated he wasn't sure if it could be sorted by street but felt whatever was sent to the Elston Grove residents would be good information for everyone. He expressed his amazement at how that whole area (Elston Grove) is turning around.

Mr. Meyer explained that what spurred his interest in this informational mailing was seeing so many healthy trees being removed. He said the general importance of trees needs to be stressed, even on private property.

Some topics suggested by the board to include in the flyer: the importance of maintaining trees; live and let live when it is a healthy desirable species; emerald ash borer; spruce disease; not topping trees.

NEW BUSINESS

President Wulff reminded board members of the language in the bylaws regarding missing consecutive meetings.

KATHY CEPERICH ENTERED AND WAS NOTED PRESENT FOR THE RECORD.

Mr. Seilheimer informed that the tree ordinance on the City's website has new language inserted for nuisance trees on private property and outlines the exact procedure the City will follow if someone is harboring a dangerous or dead tree on private property; this language is very specific to trees in Michigan City. Mr. Seilheimer recommended board members review it.

Mr. Meyer asked if there is any language pertaining nuisance species that may be healthy.

Mr. Seilheimer replied that there is no language pertaining to that for private property; but there is for public property.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Wulff updated Ms. Ceperich on the board's earlier discussion with regard to the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Ms. Ceperich asked if the board is going to do a tree giveaway again this year.

Mr. Seilheimer stated he did not have any funds. Board members agreed to use approximately \$100 of the Arbor Day Fund to purchase tree(s) for the giveaway.

Ms. Ceperich asked how the trees were doing which were given away in previous drawings.

Mr. Seilheimer stated that he checked on them late last year and they are doing well.

Ms. Ceperich indicated that she would fill out and submit the application for the board's participation in the parade on 3/9/13. She mentioned that line up is at 11:45 a.m. and the parade starts at 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Ceperich announced to the public that cards for the tree giveaway will be available at City Hall for people that cannot get to the parade.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2013.

ADJOURNMENT

The chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Meyer – seconded by Mr. Morlan and unanimously approved.

The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

/s/ Kathy Ceperich, Secretary